



Pseudorabies

What is pseudorabies?

Pseudorabies, also known as Aujeszky's disease is a contagious viral disease that primarily affects swine. The virus can affect other mammals but does not affect humans. The disease can be found across Europe and in many parts of South America, Mexico, New Zealand, and Southeast Asia. While the disease has occurred in the United States in the past, eradication and control programs are currently in place.

Is pseudorabies contagious? Who is susceptible? How is it transmitted?

Pseudorabies is contagious to various types of animals, such as pigs, cattle, sheep, goats, and many domestic pets, including dogs and cats. Horses are rarely affected. Pseudorabies is spread between animals by direct contact; body fluids (urine, feces, milk); contaminated objects, such as clothing, footwear, equipment, or vehicles, and by aerosol. Pseudorabies does not affect humans and poses no health risks. Meat from infected animals is considered safe for human consumption.

What are the signs of pseudorabies in swine?

Disease will vary depending on the age of the animal. Infected young animals may die suddenly or have trouble with coordination and may experience convulsions. Infected older animals may show respiratory disease such as from coughing, sneezing, and nasal discharge. Female animals may also experience reproductive difficulties, such as abortions.

How do I avoid pseudorabies or stop it from spreading?

If you suspect your animal is showing signs of the disease, quarantine the affected animal(s) and the contaminated area immediately. Notify your veterinarian immediately of any suspected cases. Animals infected with pseudorabies must be humanely destroyed and buried immediately to prevent the disease from spreading.

No effective treatment for infected animals has been found. Prevention is the best way to combat pseudorabies. Vaccines are available to prevent the disease, if they are used prior to an exposure. Know and follow your state pseudorabies regulations and eradication plan.

Taking a few simple precautions will help protect your animals. Keep your animals away from wildlife, rodents, and infected animals. New or returning animals should be isolated for at least two weeks before reintroduction with other animals. Restrict traffic on and off your farm. Thoroughly disinfect any equipment or vehicles entering or leaving the farm. In addition, be sure to disinfect clothing and footwear.

How is it treated?

At this time, there is no known treatment for pseudorabies. Prevention and early detection are the most effective methods to stop the spread of pseudorabies.